

Climate Change Adaptation: Idaho's Rural and Urban Differences in Acceptance of Idaho Water Resource Management Strategies

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In the Pacific Northwest of the United States, water availability is dependent on adequate precipitation and snowpack storage. As the effects of climate change become more evident one concern is how states such as Idaho will adapt to manage water resources in light of changing conditions. Without the foresight to know how water availability will change, implementing adaptive management strategies may allow flexibility in policy planning.

Previous research demonstrated that public acceptance of government policies can influence their adoption. Moreover, while differences between rural and urban communities have been well documented, there is minimal research addressing how geography influences the acceptance of water resource management. This research and presentation will address the gap in knowledge and consider the situation at multiple levels.

Using results from a 2014 general public survey, it will first outline the general differences between Idaho's rural and urban communities, including belief in climate change. It will then compare the rural/urban acceptance of water management strategies the state of Idaho may utilize to adapt.

Finally, the results integrate these perspectives into a generalizable assessment that can be targeted to other areas in the Northwest and beyond. By taking this multiple-level approach this study addresses the overall theme of hydrology and adaptation. This presentation will be of interest to resource managers, academics, and other attendees.